

4995
E

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : General Counsel, CIA
 VIA : ADSO *Kab*
 FROM : Chief, FBT *WW*

DATE: 12 September 1949

SUBJECT: Press Release Pertaining to CIA

In accordance with GAI #22, there follows a translation of an excerpt of an article appearing in El Siglo of Bogota, Colombia, on 14 August 1949.

"....When the assassination occurred and the storm broke loose and caused those extraordinary and unforgettable happenings, the gravest that have occurred in any city of the continent, Colombian liberty, which was in imminent danger of shipwreck, was saved only at the last minute by the admirable fidelity of the army which liberated the country from communist tyranny and gained thereby everlasting laurels for bravery enabling us to continue to enjoy the sacred privilege of liberty.

"It cannot be forgotten that there followed immediately thereafter a declaration made by another unquestionable authority, Admiral Hillenkoetter, Chief of the Intelligence Service of the United States, who, in an investigation of the Bogota incident conducted by the American Senate and in which he and the Intelligence Service were blamed for having permitted General Marshall to proceed to a city where such occurrences could happen, justified his action by explaining that he did, indeed, have information of what was going to happen and that he had communicated such information to the proper persons who should have intervened.

"For reasons which were beyond his (Hillenkoetter) province, this information was not followed-up or it should have been determined that Mister G. had served as intermediary between the Russian legation and Dr. Jorge Eliecer Gaitan for the delivery of funds for apparent political purposes. This is a matter of such significance that it ties in very closely with previous occurrences which I had witnessed and have just related. There was a time when Dr. Gaitan was ready to sabotage the Conference. There was another time when Dr. Gaitan gave up his earlier intentions on the recommendations of the liberal members of the Colombian delegations and recommended that the foreign delegations be treated with great respect. Finally, there was the assassination which resulted in the disturbances which had been originally planned and published in the Communist paper of Belgrade which said that agents of imperialism would have to leave Bogota like rats.....The declaration of Admiral Hillenkoetter bears out the facts that Gaitan had been prepared to give up his original plan in the interests of Colombian national pride and because of urgings from members of his

SECRET

SECRET

4995

- 2 -

party. In spite of this, his assassination was the signal for the revolution which had been originally planned and resulted in a blot on the pages of Colombian history which will never be erased even with the passing of centuries."

The article is a reprint of a speech made by Dr. Loureano Gomez over the Colombian radio on the night 13 August 1949.

SECRET